

Put a Headscarf on Elizabeth II, not on Turkey's First Lady!

In an unprecedented case of provocative misinformation, the Economist misleads its readership and diffuses Islamic terrorist propaganda by trying to present the Islamic headscarf as a personal choice that can possibly be that of a moderate, tolerant, and modern Muslim woman.



In a disreputable and subversive publication that surpasses the best hopes and the boldest dreams of criminals like Osama bin Laden, Ayman Zawahri, and their likes, the Economist tried to analyze for its readers "The Meaning of Freedom"(http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=9149827). One would expect the author of the shameless article to wonder whether the title could apply to the German voters who supported Hitler in 1933–34. Had that majority anything to do with 'the Meaning of the Freedom'?

The article consists in an incendiary pamphlet and an anti-democratic support for all Islamic extremists, like the embattled and rejected Turkish Premier Erdogan, and his criminal thugs, i.e. the present 'ministers' of Turkey. It involves forged concepts and perilous approaches that do endanger the national security of England and Europe. The author focuses his diatribe on the hypothesis that a headscarf is just a piece of fabric. But by erratically pretending so, the author attempts to convince his victims to possibly accept that it is normal for Muslim women to wear headscarf, and that there is nothing wrong with it!

This leads to straight and vicious alteration of the truth, as the Islamic headscarf consists in the premier symbol of inhuman barbarism and murderous behavior, not of Islam.

Islamic headscarf means obligatory excision.

Islamic headscarf means extrajudicial killing -in the streets of Riyadh, Jeddah, Medina and Mecca- of any woman does not wear this, otherwise innocent and democratic (!?!), piece of fabric.

Islamic headscarf means stoning and dismemberment of women unjustly and falsely accused in the streets of Damascus and Amman for adultery.

Islamic headscarf signifies immediate transformation of women to almost subhuman beings that have no rights and no status.

I challenge the criminal author of the Economist to a public conference and a public debate concerning the aforementioned.

In the rest of the article, I will unveil what is hidden as historical lie in the disreputable, crypto-Nazi publication of the Economist.

The subtitle itself is another lie; it states:

"In every corner of the Muslim world, female attire is stirring strong emotions".

This is absolutely wrong and meaningless. Female attire stirs strong emotions among men in the Western world as well. If the sentence means that "in many Islamic countries uncovered women provoke sexual envy and hysterical anger at the same time", this is correct, but why should we take the hideous feelings of some barbaric semi-cannibals into consideration?

The article features a ridiculous picture of the Turkish Foreign Minister's head-covered wife standing in front of Queen Beatrix of Holland, who laughs at her (Hayrünnisa Gül), without the idiotic Turkish woman understanding. This reveals the hidden reality of the colonial powers' targets: they want to laugh at non-Europeans, Asiatics, Africans, Americans – and they do so in the racist way they have always done. But is this a reason for Turkey to return to the Middle Age?

The article starts with the hypothetical question that the Hayrünnisa woman supposedly asks her compatriots:

"IS THIS all because of me? At once bemused and indignant, the potential first lady of Turkey demands that her compatriots stop judging her, and her spouse, on the basis of her appearance. "My scarf covers my head, not my brain," insists Hayrünnisa, whose husband Abdullah is foreign minister and aspires to be president".

The answer is very simple and very well known to Turks and Muslims; it is simply unknown to British, Americans and Europeans because of their total ignorance of Islam, and of the Orient in general, and more importantly, due to the misinformation precisely based on this ignorance.

If the average Western reader had the possibility to have access to a hundred (100) articles-reports precisely describing snapshots from the daily life in the poor districts of Cairo, Algiers, Amman, Mecca, Karachi and Kuwait, the author of the disreputable article would not write this nonsense. Actually, The Economist builds on the ignorance!

The answer to the hypothetical question is as follows:

"Yes, it is all because of you, stupid Hayrünnisa Gül, and because of your silly ideas that are reflected in your worthless headscarf. Drop the filthy piece of un-Islamic fabric, and your husband will finally have a chance of becoming President (theoretically speaking of course, as the ruling party is a minority party, which got parliamentary majority only because of the opposition's multi-division before 5 years). But of course, you do not dare drop the filthy headscarf because then the myth you build and the propaganda you diffuse among your uneducated followers would immediately collapse. You build on subversively and progressively; when you get one filthy thing done, then you unveil the next! So, because we –progressive Turks– who have nothing to do

with the barbarism of societies and cities like Riyadh, Amman, and Kuwait, reject, in our majority, to have a First Lady that helps promote a subversion plan to turn Turkey from an enlightened realm among the world's leading nations to a disgusting copy of Egypt, Pakistan and Nigeria. Plus, the headscarf was never Islamic".

It may eventually sound odd (to the -ignorant about Islam- Western reader, who -because of his ignorance- can become an innocent victim of falsification propagandas like that of the Economist) that Turks would affirm that "the headscarf was never Islamic". That is why I re-publish here an excerpt from an excellent book about the daily life in Abbasid Baghdad, when moral tolerance and joyful life, entertainment and sciences, arts and philosophy had made of the Islamic (not Arabic) world the leading force of the world.

This is the reason colonial circles and disreputable centers of misinformation publish subversive trashy literature like that of the Economist: they want to destroy Turkey by sending the entire country to the Dark Ages of Sudan, Egypt, Libya, Pakistan, Nigeria and Syria. I will continue the refutation of the Economist's pro-Islamic terrorism propaganda in a series of articles. Here, I end with a brief excerpt from the groundbreaking contribution "Baghdad, Metropolis of the Abbasid Caliphate" by Gaston Wiet (1887-1971); the text can be found here: <https://sourcebooks.web.fordham.edu/med/wiet.asp>

This is Islam, not the Hayrūnnisa woman's headscarf!

"The discovery of Sassanian antiquity and Hellenic thought at the same time added fresh impetus. In the field of literature, there was a somewhat coordinated Iranophile movement called Shu'ubiya. It consisted of a reaction, not always calm or tender, against Arab domination, both political and cultural. The promoter of this anti-Arab opposition was Sahl ibn Harun, director of the Academy of Wisdom, but in all fairness it should be said that even before him there were members of the fabulous Barmekid family who were prominent during Harun al-Rashid's reign because of their omnipotence and their tragic fate. They realized that poets played the same role as modern journalists. Poets should not, therefore, be led to oppose the regime. These great ministers were also famous for their broad tolerance; that the underlying motive was either coolness toward Islam or faithfulness to Iranian beliefs does not alter the facts.

We know, for example, that a number of famous disputants among Islamic theologians, free-thinkers, and doctors of different sects met at the home of the educated and enlightened Yahya, the grandson of Barmek. Thus, in ninth-century Baghdad a fertile literary center was formed which lighted the way for Arab letters. Poetry continued to be cultivated with the same care. The poets of the Abbasid period were worthy of their great ancestors of pre-Islamic times and of the Umayyad court. A list of the poets of genius would include: Bashshar ibn Burd, who died in 783, the standard-bearer of the

shu'ubiya and an erotic poet of great talent and robustness whose capabilities were rather disturbing from a religious point of view; Muti' ibn Iyas, who died in 787 as famous for his debauchery as for his blasphemy, as skillful in praising as in attacking; Saiyid Himyari, who died in 789 a more or less sincere panegyrist, who sought protection in the traditional way, who is particularly praised by the critics for his simplicity of style, and, as far as we are concerned, who escaped banality by his Shi'ite convictions, by the variety of his poetic themes, and by his artistic qualities; Abbas ibn Ahnaf, who died in 808 who speaks of the "power of love," always expressed his thoughts delicately and thus stands in opposition to the licentious poets who surrounded him, which explains his success in Spain; Abu Nuwas, who died in 813, the singer of the joy of living, the greatest Bacchic poet in the Arabic language, a sensual, debauched devil who became a hermit toward the end of his life and left a number of religious poems.

Blasphemous poetry tolerated in Islam

Muti' ibn Iyas and Abu Nuwas, two great lyric poets, had a pronounced taste for scandal and blasphemy. It would be an exaggeration to claim that they represented fairly accurately a certain aspect of Baghdad society. Yet, the smutty tales of the Book of Songs prove that the upper bourgeoisie was hardly overcome with moral scruples. Drunkenness was common, it seems, and perhaps even more violent thrills were sought. These poems, however, should be taken into account as a reflection of a part of society which was hungry for pleasure.

Our honors list also includes Muslim ibn Walid, who died in 823 author of love poems and drinking songs; Abu Tammam (843) and Buhturi (897), famous for their original odes and their anthologies of poetry; Di'bil (960), who lived in peril because he associated with robbers and wrote satires in truculent and unpolished language; Ibn Rumi (896), whose verses include philosophical ideas and a close look at reality and whose satires are fine and cruel without being vulgar; Ibn Mu'tazz (908), who was caliph for one day and paid for it with his life, who, as a poet of transition, painted the society around him, describing the caliph's palaces in a rather delicate style, and who, in a moving poem, gave a glimpse of the future decadence of the caliphate; Ibn Dawud (910), leader of the school of courtly love and early ancestor of our troubadours; and, above all, the peerless Abul-Atahiya (825), the earliest Arab philosopher-poet, who wrote of suffering in verses that proclaim the vanity of the joys of this world. The anthologies of these poets were compiled perhaps to combat the Iranian spirit of the Shu'ubiya in an attempt to conserve the masterpieces of the pre-Islamic period. Songs and music are perhaps more important in Baghdad than in other regions of the Moslem world. There are great names in the field of theory, Farabi for example, and in composition, the Mausilis, father and son, and Ibrahim ibn Mahdi, the ephemeral caliph.

Concerts and debauchery in Islamic Baghdad

During the reigns of several Abbasid caliphs, the Maasilis delighted the court of Baghdad. Ibrahim (804) had been the favorite of the caliphs Mahdi, Hadi, and Harun al-Rashid; he was the hero of some rather racy adventures. He led his musicians with a baton and was perhaps the first orchestra conductor. The great historian Ibn Khaldun wrote, "The beautiful concerts given at Baghdad have left memories that still last." Several poets gave accounts of the lives of the gay blades and the tough characters who frequented the cabarets of the capital.

One small work, by Washsha, contains a sketch of the worldly manners and customs of the refined class of Baghdad and is a veritable manual of the life of the dandies of the period. It also gives minute details on dress, furniture, gold and silver utensils, cushions, and curtains, with their appropriate inscriptions. Another writer, Azdi, who is reminiscent of Villon, describes the society of debauched party-goers. His poems are difficult to translate because of their truculence, their strong language, and their defiance of decent morals. We should not be too surprised at the contrast between the studious world of the translator and the medical specialists and that of the writers of licentious poetry who sang, with some talent, of pleasure and debauchery and bragged of overtly displayed corruption. The Abbasid golden age gave rise to a capable and imposing group of translators, who tried successfully to regain the heritage of antiquity.

Islamic Humanism - Irreverence toward Divinity!

Men of letters took advantage of this substantial contribution. They entered into passionate and fruitful discussions, which were dominated by the astonishing personality of Jahiz (d. 868). He is probably the greatest master of prose in all Arab literature. He was a prolific writer with a vast field of interest. In addition, his Mutazilite convictions made him a literary leader. In order to describe reality, he broke with a tradition which was bound to the past. He laid the foundations of a humanism which was almost exclusively Arab and hostile to Persian interference at the beginning, and which took on more and more Greek coloration later on. His love of knowledge and his great intellectual honesty are evident on every page of his works.

Jahiz is outstanding because of his exceptional genius, his qualities of originality, and his art in handling an often cruel and sometimes disillusioned irony, in which he was more successful than any writer before him. Jahiz pushed sarcasm to the point of mocking irreverence toward Divinity, more in the style of Lucian than of Voltaire. It is due to the tremendous talent of this prodigious artist that Arabic prose became more important than poetry. Another great writer, Ibn Qutaiba, ranks high, immediately after Jahiz, whom he survived by about twenty years. He too had an intellectually curious mind which made him a grammarian, a philologist, a lexicographer, a literary critic, a historian, and an essayist. In literature, he is an advocate of conciliation, through conviction and not lassitude, and a partisan of the golden mean. His

Book of Poetry, which shows him to be a creator of the art of poetry, contains judgments of great value.

Ibn Duraid is worthy of mention because of the role recently attributed to him by an Arab critic as creator of the Maqama, of the Seance, which will be discussed later. This philologist is one of the last contestants in a battle which, during his lifetime, interested very few men of letters, the battle against Iranophilia. Mas'udi must certainly not be neglected, not only because he was born in Baghdad but because this tireless traveler has left us a most interesting account of the history of the Abbasid caliphate. The writer of memoirs, Suli, is of interest because he speaks of events of which he was a sad and, at times, indignant witness. His contemporary, Mas'udi, says, "He reports details which have escaped others and things which he alone could have known." The date of Tanukhi's death (994) places him in the Buyid period, as does his style, but in one of his works he speaks especially of the upheaval during Muqtadir's reign. Although it was meant to entertain, this book, written in a lively style, contains a good deal of solid judgment. Another short work consists of a series of amusing, merry stories which, if taken too seriously, might give a disturbing picture of the Baghdad bourgeoisie. It is dangerous to generalize, since the book is probably about a circle of party-goers and unscrupulous revelers. In short, reading Tanukhi is quite amusing. It is impossible to mention all the prose writers who added to the glory of the ninth century in the Arabic language.

Nice Baghdad Cabarets - 1200 years old!

Those who spent several years in Baghdad profited from the extraordinarily feverish atmosphere of the place. We must not omit Ya'qubi, the geographer, who left us exciting pages on the founding of Baghdad, and Ibn Hauqal who used Baghdad as the point of departure for his voyages. The object of this resume is to show the splendor of the literary milieu of the time. Profiting from circumstances which revealed the secrets of Hellenism to them, the writers became the "keepers of Greek wisdom" and humanists of a cultural scope to be envied by future generations. The cultured residents of Baghdad liked their pleasure. They gathered secretly in cabarets, and some of them met in Christian monasteries on the outskirts of the city. The Book of Convents by Shabushti is really a description of the city's taverns. Wine was certainly drunk in these places. The Bacchic poets of the time were there to testify to that. Snow sherbets were eaten. Concerts were given in rooms cooled by punkahs. Abu Nuwas exclaims, "In how many taverns did I land during the night cloaked in pitch-like blackness. The cabaret owner kept on serving me as I kept on drinking with a beautiful white girl close to us." Gambling houses were also popular. Chess, especially, was highly favored and backgammon was second in popularity. It is probable that the shadow-theater was a form of entertainment also.

The privileged at the caliph's court were probably invited to play polo or go

hunting. Horse racing for the aristocratic public and cock-fights and ram-fights for a lower level of society were common pastimes. Popular entertainment was offered in public places. First there were the preachers, who not only delivered homilies. Perhaps they also told stories, such as the ones which were the origin of *The Thousand and One Nights*. Mas'udi writes, "In Baghdad, there was a street storyteller who amused the crowd with all sorts of tales and funny stories. His name was Ibn Maghazili. He was very amusing and could not be seen or heard without provoking laughter. As he told his stories, he added many jokes which would have made a mourning mother laugh and would have amused a serious man." There were also street hawkers who offered extraordinary products to their gaping customers.

There was even a man with diseased eyes who sold passers-by a cure for ophthalmia. We should have liked to gather archaeological evidence about the city's past. There would have been a great deal of it; the remains of Samarra could have supplied information not very long ago. We should have liked to learn about the quality of an artistic civilization that we know only through comments in books. Our enthusiasm is somewhat satisfied by the beautiful descriptive poems by Buhturi, but it is risky to depend upon poetry to analyze a piece of architecture or even to enjoy its decorative aspects.

The Search for Aesthetics

We have no authentic documents from the earlier periods on the art of the city of Baghdad itself, but we do have several vague but enthusiastic descriptions by writers. They speak of porticoes and cupolas; they go on at length about the luxuriously rich furniture in the various palaces, as we have seen in the description of the Byzantine ambassador's reception. Mural paintings are especially mentioned. At this point it is appropriate to add two quotations that contain a good deal of information. The first is from the poet Bashshar ibn Burd, who was blind. He had ordered a vase from a Basra potter and questioned the artisan about its decoration. The potter answered, "Flying birds." The poet, thinking of the pouncing animal motif which was popular at the time, said, "You should have put a predator above, ready to swoop down on them."

The great artist Abu Nuwas also clearly indicates the tastes of the time. "Wine flows among us in an ornate goblet in which the Persians had carved all sorts of figures. Horsemen, at Khosrau's side, aim at an antelope with their arrows." Fortunately, the art of Samarra makes up in part for the gaps. This decoration on plaster is bold, marked with holes, and is elegantly winding with deep, sinuous grooves. The paintings of the palace of Samarra disappeared during World War I, and we know them only through the publication by E. Herzfeld, who brought them to light. Some have remained famous and appear in all the works dealing with Moslem frescoes. There are two women dancers who approach each other and pour wine into a goblet. The flowers and the various animals recall the classic art of the Hellenic east. But of particular interest is a

solemn figure, draped in a robe decorated with a wheel motif, whose shoulders are covered with a striped hood. This could very well represent a monk.

If so, it brings to mind the painting with which Mutawakkil, the inveterate drunkard and persecutor of Shi'ites and non-Moslems, had his palace decorated. It was of an assembly of monks in a church choir and was a copy of a fresco that he had admired in a monastery in the suburbs of Baghdad. In the third quarter of the tenth century, Mesopotamian painters were invited to Egypt to paint frescoes. The story is told by Maqrizi, who refers to a History of Painters, which can be placed in the eleventh century. The passage is reminiscent of Mesopotamia. The paintings of lapis lazuli, vermilion, verdigris, and other colors were covered over with varnish. We are told that the relief of these frescoes was remarkably executed in the style of the Basra painters. Samarra sent for glassmakers and potters from Basra, and for more potters and color mixers from Kufa.

A Chinese text insists that Chinese artists taught painting in Akula (the Syriac name for Kufa), in Lower Mesopotamia. The problem, which has not been solved, is an interesting one since it concerns a region which later became famous for its book decorations. Although we do not know exactly where these industries and crafts were located in the earlier period, we know that Mesopotamia was much advanced in weaving and ceramic techniques and in brick and wood sculpture. Fortunately, an Arabic text tells of the quality of the ceramic mural tiles that were sent from the Mesopotamian capital, along with other materials, to decorate the mihrab of the Great Mosque of Qairawan: "These precious faience panels were imported for a reception room that the Aghlabid emir wanted to build, and also beams of teakwood from which to make lutes. He had the pulpit for the Great Mosque made of it. The mihrab was brought in the form of marble panels from Iraq. He placed the faience tiles on the facade of the mihrab. A man from Baghdad made tiles which he added to the first ones."



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